



Quintessence

F O U N D A T I O N

November
2014

Thankful

This year as I celebrated thanksgiving I reflected on what I was thankful for. A few weeks ago, by the light of a full moon, labour started and I made my way into hospital. I was 34 weeks pregnant. It had felt like a long pregnancy as it followed three miscarriages and I had doctors' appointments every 2 weeks. Had I written a birth plan it would have only made one request...**please do not separate me from my baby -I'd like to breastfeed... please.** I'd heard of 'Women Centred Care', but, never felt the fear of it being only lip service. Would I be left out? I did not want to be left behind after the birth was over.

Recently I had watched an episode of the BBC drama *Call the Midwife* where a mother (Conchetta) gave birth prematurely at home following a fall in the garden. In this episode the NHS flying squad came to her birth to rescue her and her baby and she refused to let her baby be taken. What really stood out to me in this mother's story was that when translated from her language into English she had said 'I am his hospital'. My premature baby was not sick, he was just early. He did not need help to breathe. He needed me to hold him as much as I could skin-to-skin to stabilize his temperature, and see and respond to his every cue to feed. I could not

have done this part-time, this was a job that required all of me, all of the time. I wanted to be able to breastfeed him. I needed to be with him every moment so he could teach me how to do this. He fed every 1-2 hours ranging from 3 minutes to 15 minutes those first two days. Regardless of duration, after every feed I'd hand

express whatever colostrum I had I would offer it to him in a syringe. I did this because he was jaundiced and started phototherapy. He had a lot of facial bruising from arriving in a face presentation. In the first 24 hours he received 61 mls of my colostrum. By 47 hours I heard him gulp at the breast (I thought this can't be so) and offered him a syringe which he then vomited up. My milk was in! At 48 hours we were exclusively breastfeeding with no further syringes or hand expression, just lots and lots of skin to skin cuddles and of course I weighed him to be sure. He taught me I needed to believe he was competent to breastfeed. Honestly, I also learned I needed to trust that I was competent to do this too.



Kirsten, Hannah & Jadon

I called my son Jadon. His name means thankful. I am so thankful we were not separated. That was three weeks ago. Now, he's well past his birth weight and gaining over 30 grams a day and still teaching me lots about breastfeeding!

Check out our Quintessence Foundation Website: www.babyfriendly.ca

Quintessence Breastfeeding Challenge 2014

With the coming of fall comes the Breastfeeding Challenge. This year was again successful with 13 countries and 216 sites and almost 10,000 participants of which 4,590 were children. Of course the real benefit of the Quintessence Breastfeeding Challenge isn't about numbers but rather about demonstrating support for breastfeeding mothers and getting the word out in communities about the importance of breastfeeding and human milk. It amazes us in the 21st century that so many women have so many challenges to overcome in order to meet their own breastfeeding goals. We have more equipment, experts and apps for breastfeeding than ever before and yet the breastfeeding rates still fall well below the recommendations. One of the challenges in many developed countries is the lack of acceptance of the normality of breastfeeding. It is difficult to continue doing something that your community may have labeled as "indecent". Such a beautiful normal act - it is wonderful to come together to celebrate. And so we did again this year.

The WABA theme was *Breastfeeding: a winning goal for life*. The theme asserts the importance of increasing and sustaining the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding. In North America, the promotion is strong but protection and support are not there in many communities. Thanks to all of you who took part in the Quintessence Breastfeeding Challenge as it is a great way to remind our communities of the need to promote, protect and support breastfeeding women!

Results of the 2014 Quintessence Breastfeeding Challenge

Global Challenge

Countries taking part:

Canada, Cyprus, Hungary, Ireland, Luxemburg, Moldova, Norway, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States.

Sites with the most participant children:

1. Chilliwack BC Canada
2. Nicosia & Nicosia Maternity Units, Cyprus
3. St -Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec, Canada
4. Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada
5. l'Outaouais, Quebec, Canada
6. Niagara region, Ontario, Canada
7. Trois-Rivières, Quebec, Canada
8. Greater Victoria, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada
9. Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
10. Limassol & Maternity Units, Cyprus

Top five countries with the most participants:

1. Canada
2. Ireland
3. Cyprus
4. United States
5. Luxemburg

Top five countries with the most sites:

1. Canada
2. Ireland
3. Cyprus
4. United States
5. Romania

The North American 2014 ratings are as follows:

Category A Regions: More than 50,000 births a year

Gold: Quebec, Canada
Silver: Ontario, Canada
Bronze: Alberta, Canada

Category B Regions: 10,000 to 50,000 births per year

Gold: British Columbia, Canada
Silver: Manitoba, Canada
Bronze: Saskatchewan, Canada

Category C Regions: Less than 10,000 births per year

Gold: Nunavut, Canada
Silver: Yukon, Canada
Bronze: North West Territories, Canada

Largest North American sites:

1. Chilliwack, BC: 213 (up from 162 last year!)
2. St-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec: 121
3. Kelowna, BC: 120

Quintessence Breastfeeding Challenge 2015: mark your calendars for October, 3, 2015.

The first hours after birth – is it just 'bonding time'?

In early November, CBC reported a new mother's concerns about separation between herself and her newly born baby (<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/kimberley-macleod-upset-by-separation-from-newborn-son-at-royal-columbian-hospital-1.2839928>). After birth following a forceps delivery, the mother was transferred to a recovery room. Her baby went with the father to meet the rest of the family. It was well over an hour before the very distressed mother was finally reunited with her baby. Understandably, the mother was upset by this unnecessary separation with her baby – she missed the first hour of her baby's life.

continued...

Possibly the most surprising part of this story is the response from the health authority. “A spokesperson with Fraser Health told CBC News that the health authority recognizes the importance of bonding time immediately after birth.” Bonding is a complex process beginning before birth and enhanced by non-separation of mother and baby. Referring to this time as ‘bonding time’ is damning it with faint praise. Yes, this first hour is part of the bonding process but there is good evidence that it involves so much more. Without question, separation after birth is very stressful for mothers. What this story fails to address is the biological imperative for uninterrupted skin-to-skin contact in the hours after birth – for both mother and baby.

Stability of the newly born infant¹: uninterrupted skin-to-skin contact helps babies become physiologically stable minimizing the stress of being born. Temperature and heart rate improve with skin-to-skin contact. Measures of stress in the newborn are less when they remain with their mother. Babies cry ten times more when separated from their mother – a tremendous waste of energy.

Feeding behaviors: Babies placed in uninterrupted skin-to-skin contact immediately after birth show a pattern of behaviors that helps them find the breast and feed well. Separation during this time may affect the baby’s ability to latch well for this early feeding. Skin-to-skin contact between mother and baby also enhances the mother’s hormonal response. Suckling at the breast within the first hours and the baby’s massage-like movements while skin-to-skin causes the hormonal responses needed for breastfeeding. Rates of exclusive breastfeeding may improve with early skin-to-skin contact^{2,3}.

Studies show that mothers experiencing a cesarean birth are more likely to have breastfeeding difficulties. Part of this difficulty may well be related to separation of mother and baby in the first hours. A quality improvement project⁴ found that the rates of supplementation in their hospital decreased when babies born by caesarean were cared for skin-to-skin with their mothers **in the operating room!** Babies were not separated from their mothers.

Mothers and their newly born infants should not be separated after birth unless there is a medical imperative. Because of multiple benefits of uninterrupted skin-to-skin contact they should be reunited as soon as possible. If the mother is unavailable, skin-to-skin care with the father or partner can help to stabilize the newborn – but this does not provide the other documented benefits for mothers and babies. Hospital procedural barriers must be changed to reflect current evidence – it is more than bonding that is at stake.

- ¹ Moore ER, Anderson GC, Bergman N, Dowswell T. (2012). Cochrane Database Syst Rev. May 6;5:CD003519. Early skin-to-skin contact for mothers and their healthy newborn infants.
- ² Bramson L, Lee JW, Moore E, Montgomery S, Neish C, Bahjri K, Melcher CL. (2010). Effect of early skin-to-skin mother--infant contact during the first 3 hours following birth on exclusive breastfeeding during the maternity hospital stay. JHL 26(2):130-7.
- ³ Thukral A, Sankar MJ, Agarwal R, Gupta N, Deorari AK, Paul VK. Early skin-to-skin contact and breastfeeding behavior in term neonates: a randomized controlled trial. (2012). Neonatology. 102(2):114-9.
- ⁴ Hung & Berg. (2011). Early skin-to-skin after cesarean to improve breastfeeding MCN 36(5):318-24.

Please feel free to share the newsletter and encourage colleagues and friends to sign up for the newsletter by emailing us at info@babyfriendly.ca and “like” us on Facebook! Find us at www.babyfriendly.ca



*Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
Quintessence Breastfeeding Challenge 2014*

Quintessence Breastfeeding Challenge 2014



Gander, Newfoundland



Kamloops, BC



St. Gallen, Switzerland



Témiscamingue, Quebec



Moncton, New Brunswick



Kingston, Ontario



Bake Lake, Nunavut



Kelowna, BC



Prince George, BC



Barrie, Ontario



Chilliwack, BC